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SIPDIS

STATE FOR IIP/G/WHA, INR/R/MR, WHA/BSC, WHA/PDA, INR/IAA

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION - UNITED NATIONS

On July 31, government-owned, editorially independent La Nacion (circ. 3,800) ran an article by columnist Jose Rodriguez Elizondo entitled, "Quo Vadis (Whither Goest Thou?) UN." Quote:

"On its 60th anniversary, the UN is suffering from the syndrome of irrelevance...which began with the UN refusal to support George H. Bush's previous war in Iraq to oust Saddam Hussein. Following Clinton, who valued multilateralism, George W. Bush took up the unfinished task, disregarding the UN at the first opportunity. And that opportunity arrived tragically with the September 11, 2001, attacks in New York. To the relief of Bush son, the UN secretary general was no longer the impudent figure his father had to deal with.... The results are there for us to see. Bush is waging war not to strengthen democracies that truly exist, but to instill democracy in other civilizations, reminding us of the medieval crusades or a science fiction author trying to implant the future in societies of the past. In this sense, he has gone further than the UN would have intended and beyond that which Western civilization permits. The worst part is that he does not know how to end this adventure, while the UN continues to seek its destiny."

KELLY